

devils, laying siege to that monastery, yet they got in and lodged there that night: being awaked the next morning, the young man came to that cell where the Hermit was lodged, and told him, I know your heart is full of horror, and your head full of confusion, astonishment and doubts, for what you have already seen since the first time of our association; but know, that I am an angel sent from heaven to rectify your judgment, as also to correct your curiosity in the researches of the ways and acts of Providence too far; for though separately they may seem strange to the shallow apprehension of man, yet conjunctly they all tend to produce good effects.

That man which I push'd into the river was an act of Providence, for he was going upon a most mischievous design, that would have ruined not only his own soul, but destroyed the party against whom it was intended; therefore I prevented it.

The cause why I conversed all night with that crew of rogues, was also an act of Providence, for they intended to go a robbing all that night, but I kept them there purposely till the next morning, that the hand of justice might seize upon them.

Touching the kind host from whom I took the silver goblet, and the clownish or knavish host, to whom I gave it, let this demonstrate unto you, that good men are liable to crosses
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and losses, whereof bad men often reap the benefit; but it commonly produceth patience in the one, and pride in the other.

Concerning that noble gentleman whose child I strangled after so courteous an entertainment, know, that that also was an act of Providence, for the gentleman was so indulgent and doating on his child, being an only one, that it lessened his love to heaven, so I took away the cause.

Touching the merchant whom I misguided in his way, it was likewise an act of Providence, for had he gone the direct way to this town, he had been robbed, and his throat cut, therefore I preserved him by that deviation.

Now concerning this great and luxurious city, whereas we spied but one devil which lay asleep without the gate, therebeing so many about this poor convent, you must consider, that Lucifer, being already assured of that riotous town by corrupting their manners every day more and more, he needs but one single centinel to secure it; but for this holy place of retirement, this monastery inhabited by so many devout souls who spend their whole lives in acts of mortification, as exercises of piety and penance, he hath brought so many legions to beset them, yet he can do no evil among them, for they bear up against him most undauntedly, maugre all his infernal power and stratagems;